

Glossary of Terms

Active voice Indicates the subject is acting rather than being acted upon. Active voice indicates that the subject is acting—doing something. (*Benjamin Franklin discovered the secrets of electricity.*)

See **Passive voice**

Adjective A word that describes somebody or something (e.g. *old, white, busy, careful, horrible*). Adjectives usually come before a noun, pronoun, or after linking verbs (e.g. *be, seem, look*).

Adverb A word that modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. An adverb tells how, when, where, why, how often, or how much. Adverbs can be cataloged in four basic ways: time, place, manner, and degree.

Aesthetics Having to do with non-tangible attributes such as artistic appeal, cultural value, or beauty.

Affix A syllable added to either the beginning or end of a base word to modify its meaning.

Alliteration The repetition of initial consonant sounds in words (e.g. *rough and ready*).

Allusion A reference in literature or in visual or performing arts, to a familiar person, place, thing, or event. Allusions to Biblical figures and figures from classical mythology are common in Western literature.

APA American Psychological Association, which publishes a guide to research writing that includes standardized methods of citing references.

Analogy A means of conveying meaning by showing the correspondence or partial similarity between varying concepts or ideas.

Analytical traits A model for comparing content in writing to writing structure by categorizing writing traits into expressive skills including purpose/voice, idea development, and organization, and into technical skills including sentence fluency, word choice, and conventions.

Anecdote A short account of an entertaining or interesting incident.

Antagonist The character in a story that portrays the adversary, enemy, contender, or competitor to the protagonist.

Apostrophe A figure of speech in which a speaker directly addresses an absent or dead person, an abstract quality, or something non-human as if it were present and capable of responding

Argumentation/Argumentative A speech or writing intended to convince by establishing truth. Most argumentation begins with a statement of an idea or opinion, which is then supported with logical evidence. Another technique of argumentation is the anticipation and rebuttal of opposing views. See **Persuasion, Persuasive writing**

Assonance The repetition of vowel sounds in non-rhyming words (ship in distress)

Atmosphere Mood or feeling in a literary work

Authority An individual or source with recognized knowledge and expertise in a particular field or on a specific subject.

Autobiography A written account of a person's life authored by himself or herself.

Ballad A poem in verse form that tells a story. See **Poetry, Refrain**

Biography A written account of a person's life authored by another person.

Blank Verse Poetry written in unrhymed iambic pentameter

Blends Two or more consonant letters that blend to make one sound

Business-technical writing Formats, wording, and content unique to the workplace that typically use the specific language of a particular occupation.

Character A person who takes part in the action of a story, novel, or a play. Sometimes characters are animals or imaginary creatures, such as beings from another planet.

Characteristics Distinguishing traits

Characterization/Character development The method a writer uses to develop characters. There are four basic methods of revealing character: (a) through a character's physical appearance; (b) through his/her own speech, thoughts, feelings, or actions; (c) through the speech, thoughts, feelings, or actions of other characters; and (d) through direct comments by the narrator about the character.

Chunking Word segmentation

Clarification An explanation that makes the meaning of an ideas, concept, or information more transparent, lucid, or definite.

Clause A group of related words that has both a subject and a predicate (e.g. *because the boy laughed*). See **Phrase**

Climax The high point, or turning point, in a story—usually the most intense point near the end of a story. See **Plot, Conflict, Rising action, Resolution**

Cohesiveness The degree to which ideas are said to “hang together,” or the degree to which elements of the knowledge/schema activation, visualizing, questioning, determining importance, inferring, and synthesizing)

Comedy In general, a story that ends happily.

Concept of print Front cover, back cover, title page, top and bottom of page, tracking print from right to left, words vs. letters, and ending punctuations

Conflict In narration, the struggle between the opposing forces that moves the plot forward. Conflict can be internal (occurring within a character), or external (occurring between characters, or between a character and an abstraction such as nature or fate). See **Plot, Climax, Rising action, Resolution**

Connotation The attitudes and feelings associated with a word. These associations can be negative or positive, and have an important influence on style and meaning. See **Denotation**

Consonance The repetition of consonant sounds within and at the ends of words (e.g. *It is blunt and flat*.) Often used with assonance, alliteration, and rhyme to create a musical quality, to emphasize certain words, or to unify a poem. See **Assonance, Alliteration, Rhyme**

Content/ideas Information, concepts, beliefs, or opinions expressed in writing or speaking.

Context clues The surrounding words, illustrations, or circumstances that clarify the meaning of a communication or story.

Conventions The widely accepted practices in English punctuation, grammar, usage, and spelling that are taught in schools and employed by educated speakers and writers.

Couplet Two consecutive lines of poetry that rhyme.

Cross-Checking Checking one cue against another (visual, structure, meaning)

Culture Groups of people based on age, gender, religion, ethnicity and ways of life.

Denotation The literal or dictionary definition of a word. See **Connotation**

Description/Descriptive Writing The process by which a writer uses words to create a picture of a scene, an event, or a character. A description contains carefully chosen details that appeal to the reader's senses of sight, sound, smell, touch, or taste. See **Narration, Exposition, Persuasion**

Determining importance The reader differentiates between less important and key ideas that are central to the meaning.

Dialect A particular variety of language spoken in one place by a distinct group of people. A dialect reflects the colloquialisms, grammatical constructions, distinctive vocabulary, and pronunciations that are typical of a region. At times writers use dialect to establish or emphasize settings as well as to develop characters.

Dialogue Conversation between two or more people that advances the action, is consistent with the character of the speakers, and serves to give relief from passages essentially descriptive or expository. See **Description, Exposition, Drama**

Diction An author's choice of words based on their correctness, clarity, or effectiveness. See **Style, Imagery**

Digraph Two successive letters that make a single sound (e.g. ship, chop, seed, seat)

Diphthong Speech sound beginning with one vowel sound and moving to another vowel sound within the same syllable (e.g. *oy* in the word *boy*).

Discipline A field of study or content area (e.g. social studies or science).

Drama/Dramatic literature A form of literature that is intended to be performed before an audience. Drama for stage is also called theatre. In a drama, the story is presented through the dialogue and the actions of the characters. See **Script**

Dramatic Irony Occurs when the audience or the reader knows something important that a character in a play or story does not know

Edit To replace or delete words, phrases, and sentences that sound awkward or confusing, and correct errors in spelling, usage, mechanics, and grammar. Usually the step before producing a final piece of writing. See **Revise**

Elaboration An explanation or extension of an idea, concept, or information that provides a deeper, more detailed, or more thorough discussion.

Electronic journalism The use of electronic media such as the Internet to convey new stories, editorials, or real-time information about current events.

Enunciation Clear pronunciation of words.

Environmental print Common words found in the environment.

Epic A long narrative that tells of the deeds and adventures of a hero or heroine. See **Poetry, Hero/Heroine**

Epithet An adjective or phrase used to express the characteristic of a person or thing in poetry (e.g. *rosy-fingered dawn*).

Essay A brief work of nonfiction that can offer an opinion on a subject. The purpose of an essay may be to express ideas and feelings, to analyze, to inform, to entertain, or to persuade. An essay can be formal, with thorough, serious, and highly organized content; or informal, with a humorous or personal tone and less rigid structure. See **Exposition**

Etymology The historically verifiable sources of the formation of a word and the development of its meaning.

Explicit information Content or meaning that is specifically stated in a text or verbal exchange.

Exposition/Expository text Writing that is intended to make clear or to explain something using one or more of the following methods: identification, definition, classification, illustration, comparison, and analysis. In a play or a novel, exposition is that portion that helps the reader to understand the background or situation in which the work is set. See **Description, Narration, Persuasion**

Fable A short, simple story that teaches a lesson. A fable usually includes animals that talk and act like people. See **Folktale**

Fairy tale A story written for, or told to, children. The story often includes elements of magic and magical folk such as fairies, elves, or goblins. See **Folktale**

Fallacy Faulty or mistaken logic.

Falling action In the plot of a story, the action that occurs after the climax. During the falling action, conflicts are resolved and mysteries are solved. See **Narration, Exposition, Rising action, Climax, Resolution**

Fantasy A literary work where the action occurs in a nonexistent and unreal world (such as a fairyland) and to a selection that involves incredible characters. Science fiction and utopian stories are forms of fantasy.

Feedback The listener's response to information and how the information was presented.

Fiction Imaginative works of prose, primarily the novel and the short story. Although fiction draws on actual events and real people, it springs mainly from the imagination of the writer. The purpose is to entertain as well as enlighten the reader by providing a deeper understanding of the human condition. See **Exposition/Expository text, Nonfiction, Informational/Expository text, Novel, Short story**

Figurative language Language that communicates ideas beyond the ordinary or literal meaning of the words. (e.g. simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole)

Figure of speech Literary device used to create a special effect or feeling, often by making some type of comparison. (e.g. hyperbole, metaphor, simile, idiom, understatement)

Flashback A scene in a story or novel that returns the reader to a time earlier than the main action.

Fluency/Automaticity Accurate and rapid word recognition including reading in meaningful phrases which allows the reader to focus on meaning.

Focus A sharply defined point, center, or theme of an effort, written passage, undertaking, or presentation.

Folktale A short narrative handed down through oral tradition, with various tellers and groups modifying it, so that it acquired cumulative authorship. Most folktales eventually move from oral tradition to written form.

Foreshadowing A writer's use of hints or clues to indicate events that will occur in a story. Foreshadowing creates suspense, and at the same time prepares the reader for what is to come.

Formal communication A presentation or written piece that strictly adheres to rules, conventions, and ceremony, and is free of colloquial expressions.

Free verse Poetry without a fixed metrical pattern.

Functional Text Writing that is used in everyday life such as signs, directions, letters, and manuals.

Genre A category of literature. The main literary genres are fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama.

Gerund A verb form that ends in -ing and is used as a noun (e.g. *Cooking is an art.*)

Grammar The study of the structure and features of a language. Grammar usually consists of rules and standards that are to be followed to produce acceptable writing and speaking.

Graphic aids (e.g. maps, charts, graphs, diagrams, timeline)

Graphic organizers Visual representations that support understanding of text (e.g. webs, t-charts, Venn diagrams, K-W-L charts).

Graphophonemic cues The use of letter/sound relationships to read a known or unknown word.

Hero/Heroine A mythological or legendary figure often of divine descent that is endowed with great strength or ability. The word is often broadly applied to the principle male or female character in a literary or dramatic work. See **Protagonist**

Heroic couplet Two rhyming lines written in iambic pentameter. The term "heroic" comes from the fact that English poems having heroic themes and elevated style have often been written in iambic pentameter. See **Iambic pentameter, Poetry, Meter**

High frequency words Words found often in print.

Historical Events Events relating to past events (e.g. D-Day, 9/11 September 11, 2001)

Homograph One of two or more words spelled alike but different in meaning and derivation or pronunciation (e.g. the noun *conduct* and the verb *conduct*).

Homonym One of two or more words spelled and pronounced alike but different in meaning (e.g. the noun *run* and the verb *run*).

Homophone One of two or more words pronounced alike but different in meaning or derivation or spelling (e.g. the words *to*, *too*, and *two*).

Hyperbole An intentional exaggeration for emphasis or comic effect. See **Overstatement**

Iambic pentameter A metrical line of five feet or units, each made up of an unstressed then a stressed syllable (e.g. *I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.* Macbeth, II.1.44) See **Meter, Poetry**

Idiom A phrase or expression that means something different from what the words actually say. An idiom is usually understandable to a particular group of people (e.g. using *over his head* for *doesn't understand*).

Image/Imagery Words and phrases that create vivid sensory experiences for the reader. Most images are visual, but imagery may also appeal to the senses of smell, hearing, taste, or touch. See **Style**

Imaginative/Literary text Fictional writing in story, dramatic, or poetic form. See **Informational/Expository text**

Independent clause Presents a complete thought and can stand alone as a sentence (e.g. *She saw paramecia when she looked through the microscope.*) See **Subordinate clause, Sentence**

Infinitive A verb form that is usually introduced by *to*. The infinitive may be used as a noun or as a modifier. For example, an infinitive can be used as a direct object (*The teacher decided to sing.*); as an adjective (*The right to vote is a valuable privilege.*); or as an adverb (*It is fun to dance after the homecoming game.*) See **Verb**

Informal communication A casual discussion, verbal exchange, note, or memorandum that may adhere less strictly to rules and conventions (e.g. a short note to a friend).

Informational/Expository text Nonfiction writing in narrative or non-narrative form that is intended to inform. See **Imaginative/Literary text**

Informational sources (e.g. periodical, nonfiction trade books, text books, electronic media, encyclopedia, atlas, thesaurus, journals, maps, globe)

Implied information Content or meaning that is suggested by text or verbal exchange, but is not specifically provided.

Inferences The forming of a conclusion from premises rather than explicit information provided in a passage.

Inferring Merging prior knowledge with text clues to draw conclusions.

Interactive writing Instructional strategy in which the teacher and students collaboratively share the writing responsibility to compose a coherent text.

Internal rhyme Rhyme that occurs within a single line of poetry. For example, in the opening line of Eliot's *Gerontion*, '*Here I am, an old man in a dry month,*' internal rhyme exists between *an* and *man* and between *I* and *dry*. See **Rhyme, Poetry**

Irony The contrast between expectation and reality. This incongruity has the effect of surprising the reader or viewer. Techniques of irony include hyperbole, understatement, and sarcasm. See **Hyperbole**

Jargon Language used in a certain profession or by a particular group of people. Jargon is usually technical or abbreviated and difficult for people not in the profession to understand.

Legend A traditional story sometimes popularly regarded as historical but unauthenticated; a myth.

Literacy The ability to read, write, speak, and understand words.

Literary devices Techniques used by a writer to convey or enhance the story (e.g. figures of speech, foreshadowing, flashback).

Literary elements The commonly accepted structures that contribute to the whole of a story (e.g. character, setting, plot, point of view, and theme)

Literary form A categorization of written structures such as poetry or prose, fiction or nonfiction, essay, or news article.

Lyric Poetry Poetry that focuses on expressing emotions or thoughts rather than on telling a story

Manipulate take apart, put together, and change one part of a word for another

Main character See **Protagonist**

Main idea In informational or expository writing, the most important thought or overall position. The main idea or thesis of a piece, written in sentence form, is supported by details and explanation. See **Theme, Thesis**

Metacognition An awareness and understanding of how one thinks and uses strategies during reading and writing.

Metaphor A figure of speech that makes a comparison between two things that are basically different but have something in common. Unlike a simile, a metaphor does not contain the words *like* or *as*. See **Figurative language, Figure of speech, Simile**

Meter In poetry, the recurrence of a rhythmic pattern. See **Iambic pentameter, Monologue, Soliloquy**

MLA Modern Language Association, which publishes a guide to writing research papers based on its prescribed documentation style.

Modes of writing The different forms of writing for different purposes. See also **Descriptive, Expository, Narrative, Persuasive**.

Monologue A long speech spoken by one actor.

Mood The feeling or atmosphere that a writer creates for the reader. The use of connotation, details, dialogue, imagery, figurative language, foreshadowing, setting, and rhythm can help establish mood. See **Style, Tone**

Moral The lesson taught in a work such as a fable; a simple type of theme (e.g. *Do not count your chickens before they are hatched.*) See **Theme**

Motif A word, character, object, image, metaphor, or idea that recurs in a work or several works.

Myth A traditional story passed down through generations that explains why the world is the way it is.

Narration/Narrative writing Writing that relates an event or a series of events; a story. Narration can be imaginary, as in a short story or novel; or factual, as in a newspaper account or a work of history. See **Description, Exposition, Persuasion**

Narrator The person or voice telling the story. The narrator can be a character in the story or a voice outside the action. See **Point of view**

Neoclassicism A revival of classical standards and forms during the late 17th century

Naturalism Extreme Realism

Nonfiction Writing about real people, places, and events. Unlike fiction, nonfiction is largely concerned with factual information, although the writer shapes the information according to his or her purpose and viewpoint. Biography, autobiography, and news articles are examples of nonfiction. See **Fiction**

Non-narrative nonfiction Nonfiction written to inform, explain, or persuade that does not use narrative structure to achieve its purpose.

Non-verbal communication Ways of conveying or altering the meaning of an intended message other than oral speech (e.g. gestures, eye contact, facial expression).

Noun A word that is the class name of something: a person, place, thing, or idea.

Novel An extended work of fiction. Like a short story, a novel is essentially the product of a writer's imagination. Because the novel is much longer than the short story, the writer can develop a wider range of characters and a more complex plot. See **Fiction, Short story**

Ode A complex generally long lyric poem on a serious subject

Onomatopoeia The use of a word whose sound suggests its meaning (e.g. *clang, buzz, twang*).

Onset The part of the syllable that precedes the vowel (e.g. /h/ in *hop*, and /sk/ in *scotch*). Some syllables have no onset, as in *un* or *on*. See **Rime**

Oral Pertaining to spoken words.

Oral tradition Customs, opinions, beliefs, and history passed from generation to generation by means of conversation or story telling.

Organization In writing, the arrangement of text in a conventional structure for each paragraph, and for the relationship between paragraphs in a multi-paragraph piece (e.g. the inclusion of an introduction, body, and conclusion).

Overstatement An intentional exaggeration for emphasis or comic effect. See **Hyperbole**

Oxymoron A figure of speech in which apparently contradictory terms appear in conjunction (e.g. *That shirt is pretty ugly.*)

Paradox An apparent contradiction that is actually true.

Parallel structure The same grammatical structure of parts within a sentence or of sentences within a paragraph. For example, the following sentence contains parallel infinitive phrases: *He wanted to join the swim team, to high dive, and to swim in relays.*

Parody Imitates or mocks another work or type of literature. Like a caricature in art, parody in literature mimics a subject or a style. Its purpose may be to ridicule, to broaden understanding of, or to add insight to the original work.

Participle A verb form ending in *-ing, -ed, -en, -n, -t, or -d*,. A participle functions like an adjective because it can modify a noun or pronoun. For example, in *a glowing coal* and *a beaten dog*, *glowing* and *beaten* are participles.

Passive voice Indicates that the subject is being acted upon (e.g. *The secrets of electricity were discovered by Benjamin Franklin.*) See **Active voice**

Pattern Repeated work or ideas.

Personification A form of metaphor in which language relating to human action, motivation, and emotion is used to refer to non-human agents or objects, or abstract concepts (e.g. *The weather is smiling on us today; Love is blind.*) See **Metaphor, Figure of speech, Figurative language**

Persuasion/Persuasive writing Writing intended to convince the reader that a position is valid or that the reader should take a specific action. Differs from exposition in that it does more than explain; it takes a stand and endeavors to persuade the reader to take the same position or to take action. See **Description, Exposition, Narration**

Phonemic awareness/Phonological awareness Awareness that spoken language consists of a sequence of phonemes. This awareness is demonstrated, for example, in the ability to generate rhyme and alliteration, and in segmenting and blending component sounds.

Phoneme The smallest unit of speech sound that makes a difference in communication (e.g. *fly* consists of three phonemes: /f/-/l/-/i/).

Phonetic Representing the sounds of speech with a set of distinct symbols, each denoting a single sound.

Phonics The study of sounds, often used with elementary phonetics in the teaching of reading.

Phrase A group of related words that lacks either a subject or a predicate or both (e.g. *by the door* and *opening the box.*) See **Clause**

Plot The action or sequence of events in a story. Plot is usually a series of related incidents that builds and grows as the story develops. There are five basic elements in a plot line: (a) *exposition*; (b) *rising action*; (c) *climax*; (d) *falling action*; and (e) *resolution or denouement*. See **Climax, Conflict, Exposition, Falling action, Resolution, Rising action**

Poetry An imaginative response to experience reflecting a keen awareness of language. Its first characteristic is rhythm, marked by regularity far surpassing that of prose. Poetry's rhyme affords an obvious difference from prose. Because poetry is relatively short, it is likely to be characterized by compactness and intense unity. Poetry insists on the specific and the concrete. See **Prose, Meter**

Point of view The vantage point from which a story is told. In the first person or narrative point of view, the story is told by one of the characters. In the third person or omniscient point of view, someone outside the story tells the story.

Prefix A word part that is added to the beginning of a base word that changes the sense or meaning of the root or base word (e.g. *re-*, *dis-*, *com-*). See **Suffix, Root**

Primary source The original person or text from which an idea, concept, or research came. See **Secondary source**

Prior knowledge/Schema/Activation A comprehension strategy that uses background knowledge and experiences to build meaning from a text. Students access and use their prior knowledge to distinguish between text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world connections.

Propaganda techniques Methods of conveying information selectively to produce an opinion or action favorable to the source of the information.

Prose Writing or speaking in the usual or ordinary form. Prose becomes poetic when it takes on rhythm and rhyme. See **Poetry**

Protagonist The main character or hero of a story. See **Hero/Heroine**

Questioning A strategy that enables students to ask questions before, during, and after reading in order to clarify understanding and make meaning.

Realism In literature and art, the attempt to depict people and things as they really are, without idealization.

Reference material features and effects (e.g. title page, subheadings, italics, captions, sidebars, photos/illustrations, charts and tables, citations, bibliography)

Resolution Also called *denouement*, the portion of a play or story where the problem is solved. The resolution comes after the climax and falling action and is intended to bring the story to a satisfactory end.

Retelling A detailed oral or written recitation of a text, including setting, major and minor events, characters, and plot.

Revise To change a piece of writing in order to improve it in style or content. Distinct from editing, revising often involves restructuring a piece rather than simply editing for word choice, grammar, or spelling. See **Edit**

Rhetoric The art of effective expression and the persuasive use of language.

Rhyme The repetition of accented vowel sounds and all sound following them in words that are close together in a poem

Rhyme scheme In poetry, the pattern in which rhyme sounds occur in a stanza. Rhyme schemes, for the purpose of analysis, are usually presented by the assignment of the same letter of the alphabet to each similar sound in the stanza. The pattern of a Spenserian stanza is *ababbcbcc*.

Rhythm The pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in a line of poetry. Poets use rhythm to bring out the musical quality of language, to emphasize ideas, to create mood, to unify a work, or to heighten emotional response.

Rime The vowel and any consonants that follow it (e.g. in *scotch*, the rime is /*och*/.) See **Onset**

Rising action The events in a story that move the plot forward. Rising action involves conflicts and complications, and builds toward the climax of the story. See **Conflict, Climax, Exposition, Falling action**

Romanticism A literary, artistic, and philosophical movement that developed during the late 18th and early 19th centuries as a reaction against neoclassicism.

Root (Root word) A word or word element to which prefixes and suffixes may be added to make other words. For example, to the root *graph*, the prefix *di-* and the suffix *-ic* can be added to create the word *digraphic*. See **Prefix, Suffix**

Rubric An assessment tool for making scoring decisions; a printed set of guidelines that distinguish performances or products of different quality. See **Scoring guide**

Satire A literary technique in which ideas, customs, behaviors, or institutions are ridiculed for the purpose of improving society. Satire may be gently witty, mildly abrasive, or bitterly critical, and it often uses exaggeration for effect.

Scaffolding A temporary conceptual framework used for constructing theories. In instruction, a means of structuring concepts to build or relate old ideas to new learning, or to elaborate a basic concept.

Scoring guide List of criteria for evaluating student work. See **Rubric**

Script The text of a play, motion picture, radio broadcast, or prepared speech that includes dialogue and stage directions.

Secondary source A quote or reference that is quoting or interpreting information from the original creator of the idea. See **Primary source**

Self-correction While reading, correcting miscues without prompting.

Self-monitoring While reading, being aware of word reading and comprehension, and correcting gaps in meaning or answering questions about text.

Semantic cues The use of meaning to read a known or unknown word.

Sentence A group of words expressing one or more complete thoughts.

Sentence fluency Accurate and rapid facility in using a variety of different sentence patterns in a single writing activity (e.g. using phrases and clauses at different positions in subsequent sentences to enhance meaning and reader interest).

Setting The time and place of the action in a story, play, or poem.

Shared writing Teacher and students compose a coherent text together. The teacher writes while scaffolding children's language and ideas.

Short story A brief fictional work that usually contains one major conflict and at least one main character.

Simile A comparison of two unlike things in which a word of comparison (often *like* or *as*) is used (e.g. *She stood in front of the altar, shaking like a freshly caught trout.*-- Maya Angelou) See **Metaphor**

Situational irony occurs when what actually happens is the opposite of what is expected or appropriate

Six + 1 Writing Traits A model for analyzing writing performance by examining use of purpose/voice, idea development, organization, sentence fluency, word choice, conventions, and presentation.

Soliloquy A long speech in which a character who is usually alone on stage expresses his or her private thoughts or feelings.

Sonnet A poem consisting of fourteen lines of iambic pentameter. See **Iambic pentameter, Poetry**

Standard English conventions The widely accepted practices in English punctuation, grammar, usage, and spelling that are taught in schools and employed by educated speakers and writers.

Standard written English The variety of English used in public communication, particularly in writing. It is the form taught in schools and used by educated speakers and writers.

Stanza A recurring grouping of two or more verse lines in terms of length, metrical form, and, often, rhyme scheme. See **Poetry, Rhyme scheme, Verse**

Stereotype A person or thing that conforms to a fixed impression or attitude.

Stream of consciousness A writing style that tries to capture the random flow of thoughts, emotions, memories, and associations as they rush through a character's mind.

Style The particular way a piece of literature is written. Style is not only what is said but also how it is said; style is the writer's unique way of communicating ideas. Elements contributing to style include word choice, sentence length, tone, figurative language, and use of dialogue. See **Diction, Imagery, Tone**

Subordinate (dependent) clause A clause that does not present a complete thought and cannot stand alone as a sentence (e.g. *because he was sick*). See **Independent clause, Sentence**

Subsume The incorporation of an idea, concept, or skill in a more complex framework (e.g. using parts of speech to learn the structure of sentences and to master sentence fluency).

Subtext An underlying, often distinct theme in a piece of writing or conversation.

Suffix A word part that is added to the ending of a root word and establishes the part of speech of that word (e.g. the suffix *-ly* added to *immediate*, an adjective, creates the word *immediately*, an adverb). See also **Prefix, Root**

Syllable A unit of pronunciation with a single vocal sound.

Symbol A person, place, or object that represents something beyond itself. Symbols can concisely communicate complicated, emotionally rich ideas.

Symbolism In literature, the serious and extensive use of symbols.

Synonym A word that has a meaning identical with, or very similar to, another word in the same language (e.g. in some situations, *right* is a synonym of *correct*).

Syntactic cues: The use of correct grammar to read a known or unknown word.

Syntax The way in which words are put together to form constructions, such as phrases or sentences.

Synthesize: Combining new information with existing knowledge to form an original idea or interpretation.

Tall tale A distinctively American type of humorous story characterized by exaggeration. See **Folktale**

Technical writing Composing text for the purpose of conveying specific information about a particular subject, craft, or occupation (e.g. creating computer manuals or writing textbooks).

Text features Various ways of manipulating and placing text to draw attention to or emphasize certain points or ideas in narrative (e.g. bolding or boxing questions, italicizing key vocabulary, listing, bulleting, numbering).

Text structure The organizational pattern an author uses to structure the ideas in a text (e.g. cause/effect, compare/contrast, description, problem/solution, sequential, goal/action/outcome, concept/definition, proposition/support).

Theme A central idea or abstract concept that is made concrete through representation in person, action, and image. Theme is not simply a subject or an activity, *vice* for instance, but a proposition, such as “*Vice seems more interesting than virtue but turns out to be destructive.*” Sometimes the theme is directly stated in the work, and sometimes it is given indirectly. There may be more than one theme in a given work. See **Main idea, Moral**

Thesis An attitude or position taken by a writer or speaker with the purpose of proving or supporting it. See **Main idea**

Time period A time surrounding major events that influenced culture.

Tone An expression of a writer’s attitude toward a subject. Unlike mood, which is intended to shape the reader’s emotional response, tone reflects the feelings of the writer. Tone can be serious, humorous, sarcastic, playful, ironic, bitter, or objective. See **Mood, Style**

Topic The meaning a literary work refers to, stated in a phrase or word.

Tragedy A play, novel or other narrative showing serious and important events in which the main character comes to an unhappy end.

Transitions In writing or speaking, a sentence, phrase, or paragraph that leads from one concept or idea to the next.

Verb A word, or set of words, that expresses action or state of being.

Verbal Irony Occurs when a writer or speaker says one thing but really means the opposite

Visualizing A strategy that enables the reader to create mental images during the reading process.

Visual organizer Materials I can see (e.g. calendars, wall charts, signs)

Voice A writer's unique use of language that allows a reader to perceive a human personality in his or her writing. The elements of style that determine a writer's voice include sentence structure, diction, and tone. The term can also be applied to the narrator of a selection. See **Diction**

Word derivations The tracing of the origin of a word. Many English words have evolved from words in ancient or non-English languages, and have subsequently come into modified use in modern English language.

Word origins A beginning, starting point, or source of a word used in modern English language.

Word parts (e.g. syllables, root words, origins, prefixes, suffixes, spelling patterns including onsets and rhymes)

Writing process The steps a writer uses to compose a text. This may include brainstorming, writing, revising, editing and publishing.